

Hurricane Katrina Panel

Introductory Statement of Steve Davis

Senior VP, Engineering

Clear Channel Radio, Inc.

Hello, my name is Steve Davis. I am Senior Vice President of Engineering for Clear Channel Radio. In that capacity I had the challenge and opportunity of directing Clear Channel's preparation for, and response to, Hurricane Katrina.

Hurricane Katrina had an impact on Clear Channel's Radio operations in a number of our radio markets, including Laurel – Hattiesburg and Biloxi, Mississippi; New Orleans, Louisiana; Pensacola, Florida and Mobile, Alabama. The impact of the storm was significant and in some cases devastating. Damage to our infrastructure included damage to and in some cases forced abandonment of studio facilities; downed towers; loss of electrical power; loss of/damage to transmitting facilities, equipment and buildings; loss of satellite reception capability; and loss of microwave transmission capability between our studio and transmitter locations. Damage to the infrastructure or capabilities of our common carrier and cellular providers (represented by some of my fellow panelists here today) also had an impact on our communication capabilities as voice and data, land and radio-based communication services suffered various outages.

Clear Channel's long tenure in the broadcast industry and experience dealing with disasters both natural and man-made, has enabled us to amass a considerable stockpile of resources that proved invaluable in helping our stations, and our fellow broadcasters, to stay on the air in all of the communities we serve. Katrina put those resources to the acid

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test, and while we were able to maintain vital service to all of our communities during and after the storm, we learned a great deal from this experience and have incorporated what we've learned into our continually evolving disaster preparation and recovery plan.

Fortunately with hurricanes, unlike some other disasters such as earthquakes that have also impacted our operations, there is some advance warning. We took advantage of that lead time to hold conference calls with all of our radio markets in the potential path of the storm. We set up an e-mail list, phone chain and distributed our hurricane preparation checklist; discussed evacuation plans, contingency and emergency operation; communication methods during any loss of our normal services; availability of corporate resources such as diesel fuel, transmitting trucks, portable generators, portable satellite uplinks and downlinks, satellite phones, tower repair crews, etc. -- prior to Katrina's landfall. We staged our resources close to but out of the path of the approaching storm. We called on engineers from outside the impacted area to begin to head towards the area to help our local engineers and broadcasters, but stay just out of harm's way until the worst passed.

In Hattiesburg, Mississippi, hurricane winds felled a 1000 foot broadcast tower from which two of our stations transmitted. Because Clear Channel owns multiple stations in this radio market, we were able to continue to provide vital local news and information via our other stations in the area. When a microwave tower at our Hattiesburg studios also collapsed during the height of the storm, we were unable to feed programming from our studios and transmitters and instead we took a feed from the radio stations we own in the nearby Jackson, Mississippi radio market, which provided a mix of Jackson, and Laurel-Hattiesburg, news and information. One of our Regional

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Engineering Managers was soon on site helping our local engineering team to manage the recovery effort, and within fifteen hours the microwave tower was restored and we resumed local programming with 24/7 news and information originating in Laurel-Hattiesburg. We believe that having regional engineering managers with deep experience and technical expertise strategically located throughout the country is one key to our ability to respond rapidly and decisively.

Construction of a new 1000 foot tower commenced almost immediately. In the meantime our engineering team obtained a spare antenna from one of our stations in Wichita, Kansas and mounted that on a temporary structure so WNSL and WUSW could once again serve the public, albeit with reduced signal coverage. Because of our on hands management of this triage effort we were able to keep the FCC fully apprised, in almost real time, as stations went off the air, or returned to the air, and whenever stations were operating with temporary or auxiliary facilities.

Widespread and long-term electrical power outages were common in the path of Katrina, with two and three-week outages being common. Not only were generators a necessity, but ensuring a steady stream of fuel was essential. Thankfully Clear Channel also has an Outdoor Advertising (Billboard) division. This division has large trucks and drivers with commercial drivers' licenses and hazardous materials permits. Clear Channel Radio maintains a diesel fuel stockpile for emergencies at one of our Outdoor facilities, and our Outdoor Division drivers were able to maintain a continuous "bucket brigade" hauling fuel to our generators (both permanent and temporary) so we could provide uninterrupted service, information, and hope to the listeners in the communities we serve.

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Another manner in which our Outdoor Division was able to provide invaluable assistance was in providing huge vinyl sheets to use as tarps and roof coverings. In Biloxi, Mississippi, portions of the roof were ripped off our studio building. Many of our employees had lost their homes in the storm and were living at the studio. Using these vinyl sheets, we were able to cover the roof, preventing leaks and making the facility habitable until real repairs could be made. We also provided these sheets to employees and citizens who needed them. We had permanent generators in place to power most of our Biloxi facilities and give our employee-residents at the studios some HVAC and electricity.

In New Orleans the damage was the most serious and widespread. On Sunday morning the Governor ordered an evacuation of the city. We held a conference call to prepare our equipment to accept a program feed from outside the city of New Orleans. Initially we thought that this programming would originate from facilities within our stations in Mobile. However the path of the storm wasn't completely predictable, and as it turned out Mobile had some challenges and damage, while Baton Rouge, a market only 50 miles from New Orleans in which Clear Channel also owns and operates radio stations, was unscathed. So we made the "field expedient" decision to originate our New Orleans programming from Baton Rouge.

Eventually all radio broadcasters with studio facilities within New Orleans abandoned those studios. Clear Channel hastily constructed a shared, network facility within our Baton Rouge facilities, and invited other broadcasters, including Entercom (represented by my colleague on this panel) to join our New Orleans staff and utilize

those facilities to provide news and information to all listeners within the New Orleans radio market. Thus was the “United Broadcasters of New Orleans” born.

Clear Channel and Entercom both lost a shared FM transmitting facility due to high water. This site was the broadcast point for three FM radio stations. To continue to broadcast we installed lower-power transmitters at another, centrally located site owned by American Tower Company. That site (the “ATC Site”) became something of a nexus for New Orleans broadcasting. It was the broadcast transmitter home to a number of government agencies, including the US Coast Guard, FBI, IRS and DEA. Sprint, Cingular and Nextel also use this facility. WPXL TV, WUPL-DT, WHNO TV and a number of LP Television stations transmit from this facility. Additionally, FM radio stations WQUE, WYLD, WEZB, WTKL, WLMG, and WWNO, two of which are Clear Channel stations, all transmit from this facility.

Clearly it was essential to the citizens of New Orleans and the surrounding area, and the first responders involved in the recovery effort, that this important facility continue to operate. Fortunately this was a very hardened site, with heavy concrete walls, good grading and drainage, and a very large generator with a high capacity fuel tank. However even the large tank could not support operation of all these stations indefinitely. In anticipation of an extended power outage (which we in fact experienced), Clear Channel had our Outdoor division provide a continuous convoy of fuel trucks, initially all the way from our emergency fuel depot in Orlando, Florida. With the help of chain saws and some heavy equipment, they were able to bring in supplies to the tower crew that lived on site as they secured the tower facility and made repairs as needed. We were able to find a mechanic at nine o’clock on a post-hurricane Friday night to come out and

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service the sole source of power that kept our facility going for three weeks while we all waited for the power to come back on. Clear Channel is not just a large corporation; it's thousands of people doing what they do best: serving the people, whether it's entertaining, informing or just talking with you. And when the need arises, handing you a case of water and a bag of ice, and a tarp.

Here's where we owe a huge "Thank You" to Kevin Martin and his team at the FCC, including especially Peter Doyle (Chief, Audio Division):. our fuel supply line stretching from Orlando to New Orleans rivaled that of a major military invasion. Peter and his team were able to help us to secure access to a FEMA fuel depot in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, shortening our supply line from hundreds to just tens of miles. Clear Channel continued to provide the trucks and manpower but FEMA provided a much appreciated nearby source of fuel.

With traditional cellular services either down or overtaxed by demand, land lines down, and power out, we relied on Satellite Phones that we brought in from out of market to communicate with local and visiting reporters in the field, engineers leading the technical and facilities restoration efforts, and our trucking team hauling fuel, small generators for citizen use, tarps and vinyls, ice, food and water into the impacted area.

It is clear all of the industries represented by the members of this esteemed panel, and the FCC, made Herculean efforts to restore service to the citizens impacted by Katrina. Some issues that we believe this panel should focus on include:

- Granting broadcasters "first responder" status with regard to restoration of cell phone and other vital services so that we can gather and communicate vital information to the citizens. Radio can be a key partner to first

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responders and government officials in communicating with the citizenry, providing hope, preserving order, and marshalling a recovery effort.

- Direct access to FEMA officials and fuel supplies so that we can continue to provide our service in the public interest, convenience and necessity.
- A credentialing or authentication scheme whereby our authorized engineers, reporters and other first line responders can gain access to the impacted areas including our studio and transmitter sites during a national emergency or other declared disaster.

Thank you for your kind attention!